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ABSTRACT

This pamphlet on getting and keeping members is the twelfth of 16 in a series to provide leaders in adult activities with sound introductory material to give practical help in using a method of adult education or working in a particular area. Its objective is to help leaders of adult groups find and keep members. Eight articles and how-tos are included. "Why Do People Join?" presents results of interviews with a psychologist and two sociologists regarding what people want from group affiliation. The two chapters on "On Principle and Policy" and "The Membership Committee" are intended to give guidance in organizing for membership growth. A variety of suggestions for involving people in an organization and keeping them involved are made in "The Crucial Job of Recruiting," "Keeping Your Members," and "The Problem of Dropped Members." "A Measure of Attendance" takes a somewhat unconventional view that emphasizes quality rather than numbers. "Who Belongs to What in a Big City" highlights findings from a study of participation in Detroit organizations and offers some facts to challenge impressions about the role of organizations in the life of a metropolis. (YLB)

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Leadership Pamphlet # 12

A practical aid to leaders in education, government, welfare, health, farm, labor, religion, industry, and the community . . .

GETTING AND KEEPING MEMBERS

Practical aid in solving the everyday problems of:

- finding new members
- keeping old members involved
- reducing drop-outs
- increasing meeting attendance
- working with the membership committee
- relating membership goals to program goals

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Adult Education Association of the U.S.A.

Leadership Pamphlets are prepared and distributed by the Adult Education Association of the U.S.A. Each pamphlet provides leaders in adult activities with sound introductory material which can give practical help in using an important method of adult education or working in a particular area with insight and skill.

Pamphlets in this series are:

P1 —How to Lead Discussions
P2 —Planning Better Programs
P3 —Taking Action in the Community
P4 —Understanding How Groups Work
P5 —How to Teach Adults
P6 —How to Use Role Playing
P7 —Supervision and Consultation
P8 —Training Group Leaders
P9 —Conducting Workshops and Institutes
P10—Working with Volunteers
P11—Conferences that Work
P12—Getting and Keeping Members
P13—Effective Public Relations
P14—Better Boards and Committees
P15—Streamlining Parliamentary Procedure
P16—Training in Human Relations

Adult Education Association of the U.S.A.
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Washington, D.C. 20006

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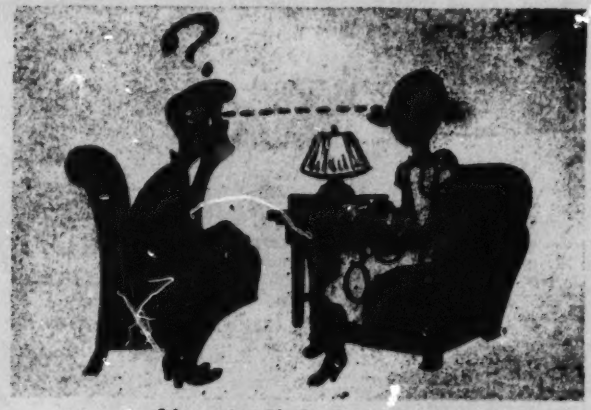
*Adapted from materials prepared by Charlotte Demorest; Olive McKay; George D. Cole. *Alpine (N.J.) Community Church*; Siegmar F. Blumberg, Jr., *Connecticut Commission on Civil Rights*; J. Wayne Newton, *Greater Hartford (Conn.) Community Council*; Bernard Kutner, American Jewish Congress; and Margaret S. Wingert, *Association of Junior Leagues of America.*

Begin with establishing rapport



It's easier if the interviewer has something to go on

Cartoons from filmstrip, "The Recruiting Interview"
Filmstrip costs $7.50 and may be purchased from
Girl Scouts of the U.S.A., 155 E. 44th St., New York 17, N.Y.

INTRODUCTION

How can we get people interested? How can we get people to attend? How can we get those who attend to participate? How can we keep members from dropping out?

These are among the questions most often asked by leaders of adult groups—the men and women who work with service clubs, PTA's, civic groups, labor, farm, industrial and business associations, social agencies, and adult education classes.

Good members, like good leaders, are made, not born. But before they can be made, they must be found. And before they can be found, someone must know where to look for them and what to look for. Every day scores of new members are being looked for, found, and enrolled in a great many organizations. Unfortunately the number of new members does not always meet the requirements of the groups who seek them. And sometimes new members find themselves in the wrong group.

How many times have you been asked to join some adult group? How were you asked? Who asked you? Why were you asked? How did you feel about it? What actually happened after you said "yes"? What happened when you said "no"? What prompted you to say "yes" or "no"? Did you change your mind after you had said "yes" or "no" because the organization did something you didn't like? Because it was lacking in some way?

Have you ever asked anyone to join one of the organizations you belong to? What prompted you to ask him, and what did you say when you invited him to join? Why did you say the particular things you said and not others? What did you do after he said "yes"? What did you do if he said "no"?

Perhaps in recalling your own varied experiences and comparing them with those described in the pages of this pamphlet, you may gain new and useful insight into why members come and go. Put a bit differently, the problem might be how many members does an organization need, what kind of members does it need, and for how long does it need them? How can it find

them, induce them to join and to participate? How can it keep them?

"Why do People Join?" presents the thinking of a psychologist and two sociologists on what people want from group affiliation. The chapters on "The Crucial Job of Recruiting," "Keeping your Members," and "The Problem of Dropped Members" contain a variety of suggestions for involving people in an organization and keeping them involved.

"A Measure of Attendance" takes a somewhat unconventional view that emphasizes quality rather than numbers.

"Who Belongs to What in a Big City" highlights findings from a study of participation in Detroit organizations and offers some facts to challenge our impressions about the role of organizations in the life of a metropolis.

The chapters on "Of Principle and Policy" and "The Membership Committee" are intended to give guidance in organizing for membership growth.

It is hoped that this pamphlet will provide any membership committee with a number of new approaches to its job. Nevertheless, it must be remembered that an organization's attractiveness depends as much on the strength of the whole organizational program as it does on the aggressiveness of its membership committee. Reference to other pamphlets in the *Leadership* series (listed on the inside front cover) may provide further help in building a program which will draw members to it. ◇ ◇

WHY DO PEOPLE JOIN?

Interviews with Three Experts on the Psychology and Sociology of Group Membership

INTERVIEW ONE

Interview with Gordon W. Allport, chairman, Department of Psychology, Harvard University. (Interviewer: Bernard Kutner, Commission on Community Interrelations, American Jewish Congress)

Q. Why do people join groups?

A. For many reasons. Although I should like to check my hypothesis through research, I shall state it now for what suggestive value it may have. Basically, people join organizations to fulfill a variety of needs. There are at least three fundamental reasons why people join groups voluntarily.

1. Conformity. A person, really indifferent at heart, may think it good policy or expedient to "sign up" with Rotary, PTA, YMCA, or the Board of the Family Society. Others join in this manner and Mr. Smith feels some stake in acting as they do.

There is no real interest here, and the member may seldom be valuable from the point of view of the group —excepting sometimes in cases of high status (v.i.p.)

joiners whose names may be useful on letterheads.

2. Ego-defending membership. To many people joining spells safety. There are avid "institutionalists" among church members, lodge members, sorority members. There are superpatriotic societies which provide their members with a sense of security, status, superiority.

The prevalence of bigotry among rabid institutionalists has been discovered in the research of the California authors of *The Authoritarian Personality*. It turns up likewise in Nancy Carter Morse's research on the personality factors common to anti-Semites. I would characterize this type of joining as an attempt to bolster the ego in its present condition. One wants to justify oneself, to be secure, to have status, and to feel that other groups are inferior and something to be guarded against. This kind of joiner has no interest in broadening his vision, enlarging his circle, or extending his sense of selfhood.

3. Ego-extending (self-extending) membership. People who wish to grow find new memberships one important medium. An old lady of my acquaintance in the last years of her life joined a religious study circle (not of her traditional persuasion), a poetry club, and an adult education center. When I asked her why, she replied, "Because I want to learn something new before I die."

This type of joining takes place at the "growing edge" of the personality. A young woman who comes to realize how her role in society requires intelligent citizenship may decide that she should join the League of Women Voters. A person concerned with foreign affairs, and who wishes to substitute information for his previous bias, may join the Foreign Policy Association.

Q. Why do some people avoid joining?

A. Here, I think, the answer must be in more pluralistic terms.

We assume that the individual is confronted with the opportunity of joining some groups that he "ought" to join. That is to say, it would be to his advantage in terms of conformity, ego-defense, or self-extension; yet he fails to join. Why?

Without pretending to be exhaustive I shall list a number of possibilities:

1. Principle of least effort. It takes time, money, and effort to join and to retain memberships, especially the latter. Fr. Humphrey's study of the meatpackers union at Swift & Co. shows that most workers are union members (because they are signed up routinely when they get their jobs), but very few maintain membership in an active way. Labor is fatiguing. Evenings and weekends one wants to rest. Television or radio provides a wholly passive recreation. Why "look for trouble" which membership brings? Sensory pleasures take less effort than do intellectual or social activities. (However, for some people the motive "to have fun" may act to promote rather than impair joining.)

2. Fear of commitment. People with even a moderate degree of sophistication fear that joining will lead to more involvement than they may wish: financial contributions, holding office, or political complications. This reason undoubtedly at the present time retards people from joining all manner of politically interested groups, even though they believe in them.

3. Lack of understanding and lack of insight. A study of American youth in comparison with the youth of other nations by James Gillespie shows that American youth is given to "privatism"—to a self-separation from the political and social context of their lives. They have such high standards of living set before them that they think their careers and their families will take all their time. Let George take on the responsibility for maintaining democracy—which they enjoy. Schools have failed to give youth a sense of duty in connection with civic participation.

Q. Why do some participate actively?

A. This is a good question because research has shown that the *same* people participate actively in many groups. The busier they are the more effectively do they seem to take on new responsibilities. Each community has only a small percentage of its citizens who are participators. I can only guess at the reason. Participators whom I have

known seem to me to fall roughly into two groups.

1. There is the compulsive individual who gains in prestige, dominance satisfactions, exhibitionism, by being on the go and courting both the limelight and power.

2. There is the reluctant but mature person who participates from a sense of duty. He can scarcely believe in a cause without doing his best for it. This is the mature personality with a wide range of self-extension. He wants to be a good citizen, a good parent, a "whole man." Thus he joins many organizations and participates in all of them.

It is true that some active participators are devoted to one and only one group. (I have implied perhaps a little too strongly that participation is a "general trait.") But even for these one-track participants, I imagine the two reasons given would hold true.

We dare not rule out the factor of constitutional endowment (temperament). A person would have to be healthy, vital, and able to utilize his intelligence efficiently in order to be conspicuously participant. Probably he would have to have a certain amount of social training and social ease, likewise.

Q. Why do some take no active part in the groups they join?

A. *1.* Because they are not motivated. Their membership may be involuntary or at best a "conforming" membership (i.e., no real need is represented or filled).

2. Because they are temperamentally unsuited: lazy, fatigued, shy.

3. Because they cannot affiliate readily. They get angry, cynical, irritated by having to adjust to others. They lack social ease or "social creativity."

4. Because they fear over-committing themselves.

5. Because they do not see the relevance of their own activity to their own destiny. Here we have the studies of non-voters. Most citizens do not even see that voting is a way of shaping their own lives.

6. Because the emphasis in our culture has been on individual "rights" rather than on individual "responsibilities."

Q. What can we do to change people's behavior

with respect to their habits of participation?

A. Hammer, hammer, hammer, during school years upon the ethical duty of each person to participate actively in some aspect of

domestic life	political life
recreational life	*(local and national)*
adult education	occupational life
neighborhood life	religious life

In "Psychology of Participation" I noted that we must allow for one or two blind spots in the above list, for individuals are not all so rounded. Also we must not expect a person to participate in every possible group. But a mature personality needs to affect the conditions of his life through some wholehearted activity in certain regions of his existence.

For adults, I have one suggestion. Many timid souls can be brought out, can be made to feel effective, and can grow in self-confidence, simply by requesting them to take on participant duties. The sense of success (and don't forget to praise them) will often change their retiring natures into active natures.

Q. Why do people drop out of groups?

A. *1.* Because in the case of conformists there is little steam to maintain interest.

2. Because in the case of ego-defenders there are new fashions and currents which draw the individual to equivalent memberships.

3. Because in the case of self-extenders, there is genuine growth beyond the stage where a given group can fulfill the need. The youth leaves the Boy Scouts, the young radical grows more conservative, the country club seems too rutted to a former member who is still seeking new worlds.

4. Because of disillusionment. The organization turns out not to fulfill the need in question.

5. Because, in the case of older people, there is a deliberate withdrawal, in order to allow the young to take over.

6. Because subgroups of friends or cliques are broken up.

INTERVIEW TWO

Interview with Eduard C. Lindeman, formerly professor of social philosophy, New York School of Social Work, Columbia University, and Wilbur C. Hallenbeck, professor of education in the social foundations, Teachers College, Columbia University.
(Interviewer: J. Wayne Newton, associate executive secretary, Greater Hartford Community Council, Hartford Connecticut)

Q. What sociological factors influence an individual in joining or not joining a group?

A. ***(Lindeman)*** It seems clear that the act of becoming a member of a group or the decision not to join a group is a complicated motivational affair. The sociological involvements of such an act cannot be readily separated from other elements. Among the factors which may be roughly classified as being sociological are the following:

1. Joining or not joining a group may be part of the fashion or the style in a particular community; joining becomes an easy matter if it happens to be the fashionable thing to do.
2. Prestige is in one sense a sociological factor; groups which limit their membership thereby increase the desire to join on the part of those citizens who are seeking advancement of status.
3. Communities with histories of organizational failures develop an atmosphere which acts as a barrier against joining.
4. The number of organizations in a community competing for the citizen's time may be regarded as a sociological factor.
5. Leadership may be regarded as a sociological factor; people attach themselves to dynamic personalities. Likewise, when leadership is weak and uninspiring it is a simpler matter to behave negatively with respect to membership.
6. Fear of social ostracism, of being penalized, prevents many people from joining groups.
7. Groups which purport to be definitely educational or cultural in purpose and offer no other rewards to self-interest often repel certain sectors of the population. (This factor is probably related to 1 above)

10 **A.** ***(Hallenbeck)*** I would say that people join groups

because they must. Our society operates on the basis of groups, not of individuals. This fact becomes quite obvious when you look at the primary reason why people join groups: they must do so in order to earn a living. Most people work for organizations of one kind or another; very few earn their living as individuals. Even the private doctor must affiliate with a group—a hospital—in order to obtain hospital care for his patients. People are forced into groups whether they like it or not.

Secondly, people join groups because most of the things they want to do for their own pleasure must be done in groups. Even television is viewed in groups, not only for financial reasons, but also because of the added interest derived from viewing with others. The baseball team, the choral society, the checker club are but a few examples of the groups people join because greater enjoyment will result or because the activities require groups.

Also, people join groups because many things they think ought to be done can only be done in groups. The improvements we want to see in our neighborhood or our city can only be achieved as people get together for joint action. When mother sees that the neighborhood boys are getting into too much deviltry, she knows that she must find an existing group or create a new one to bring about any significant change in the situation. Only as people join with others with the same concern about community problems can they accomplish anything significant.

And last, I am convinced that in many cases people join groups just because they are gregarious human beings, rather than because they are specially interested in the program of the group or the organization of which it is a part. All of us like to be with others. The urbanization of our society has brought the lonely individual, one who, unless he belongs somewhere, is a most unhappy individual. This being true, a real responsibility is placed upon groups and their leaders to develop the interests of these people into active participation in the group, a step beyond membership for the sake of fellowship. True, it is not always easy to

determine the real reasons why a person becomes a member. But the task of moving to this next step is not too difficult. Have you ever noticed how often groups which start just because people want to be together quickly move toward saying, "Let's *do* something together?"

Q. Does sociology have any answer to the question, "Is this group necessary?"

A. ***(Lindeman)*** This question might be transposed to read, "Does sociology have any reliable tests for the utility and efficiency of group activity?" The answer must be primarily in the negative. It might be assumed that social institutions would automatically cease to exist unless they continued to serve some useful purpose, but observation leads to the conclusions that this is not an invariable rule. Social organizations, once established, may survive even when they may be demonstrably harmful.

In a closed society, a totalitarian state, it might be feasible to construct a list of human needs and then regard only those groups as necessary in which there is an avowed attempt to satisfy one of the official needs. In an open society, however, it is assumed that needs are dynamic and that consequently there must be freedom to satisfy changing needs through new forms of group organization.

These negativistic responses to the question should not be taken to mean that nothing can or should be done by sociologists. As a matter of fact, I have myself made several excursions into the field of measurement of group success and failure. The first was an attempt to measure the efficiency or output of joint committees in industry. The record of this experiment is to be found in *Dynamic Social Research* by Hader and Lindeman, Library of Philosophy, Psychology and Scientific Method. The second was an ad hoc effort to set up standards for the measurement of success and failure of voluntary institutions and agencies and has been made available by the Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies of New York City.

In both of these enterprises it was assumed that sociology should not be regarded as being a science in

the sense that it could announce laws derived from controlled experimentation. Sociology is a science only in the clinical sense. The clinical approach to the observation of group behavior has already begun to yield promising results, and we may look forward hopefully to the time when sociologists will be able to suggest trustworthy criteria for judging the utility of groups.

A. *(Hallenbeck)* In the light of our answer to the first question, it is easy to see that the existence of any group—other than the obviously anti-social, of course—is prima-facie evidence of its value. The individual, however, has a real obligation to appraise the groups to which he belongs or might belong. He must assess each group using two criteria. First, what does it mean to me? What satisfaction do I get from it? And second, and equally important, how does this group help me in meeting my responsibility to the community in which I live, whether that community be the neighborhood, the city or town, the nation or the world?

Q. What do you see as the value of voluntary groups in modern society?

A. *(Lindeman)* Voluntarism is an essential ingredient in the democratic way of life. If there were no voluntary groups, all functions would be performed by bureaucratic, official groups. Under such circumstances it is difficult to see how freedom could survive. In a monolithic society power tends to concentrate at a central and visible point. In democratic societies, on the contrary, power tends to be dispersed. Governments are themselves separated in such manner as to create a certain independence on the part of executive, legislative, and judicial branches. This separation of powers is at times the cause of confusion and impediment. This is one of the costs of freedom. As Ralph Waldo Emerson once remarked, "Democracy is like a raft. It never sinks but you're always getting your feet wet."

If one were to list some of the values which accrue from voluntary groups, certainly the following would need to be included:

1. Inventiveness is free to operate in all directions.
2. Citizens of widely divergent temperaments have an

opportunity for self-expression.

3. Official decisions are tempered by the knowledge that private associations are there and are likely to provide a superior demonstration.
4. The cluster of governing bodies which control the affairs of voluntary associations constitutes a kind of unofficial parliament. Decision-making is uncontrolled by partisan or political considerations.
5. Voluntary associations, thus, become a complement to official bodies; they act as checks upon each other and thus keep the doors of experimentation open.
6. Voluntary groups offer the citizen an opportunity to exercise his free will, to choose certain activities without any degree of coercion.
7. Work in and through voluntary groups provides the citizen with an opportunity to become acquainted with his community and the way in which it operates.

A. ***(Hallenbeck)*** We are functionally well organized in modern society; our official structure is good. But that part of society which involves voluntary participation in the affairs of cooperative living is weak, even though it is the very root of democracy and the most important aspect of community life. The dynamic of community improvement lies in voluntary groups where people *choose* to do something about things that concern them. Without such voluntary participation our democratic society could not long endure. ◇ ◇

ON PRINCIPLE AND POLICY

As we viewed the process of the developing and shifting relationships among members, would-be members, and ex-members of a group, we felt that it might be possible to derive certain principles from such an overview. These would be of concern to individuals anticipating or holding membership in groups, and to groups or organizations whose continuing useful lives depend upon having interested, actively participating members.

1. There should be a respect for *individual integrity* and this integrity should be maintained. Otherwise the individual member will discover in time that he is being used,

or that in some other way he is being taken advantage of, and any good chance of his participating effectively will be lost.

2. There should be *rotation* among the members of official leadership positions, and opportunities for all members to make their initiative felt and to take unofficial leadership roles in the organization's activities.

Warden Lawson has some tips for us on how to hold members!

3. There should be adequate *channels of communication* between all members and the designated leaders in the group. Keeping the channels open in a small group is reasonably simple, provided the leaders are receptive to suggestions and help from the members. In more complex organizations there should be communication not only of the face-to-face sort which is common in the subgroups within an organization, but of a remoter sort —the sort that makes use of newsletters and audio-visual aids to reach a large number of people or people who are widely scattered.

4. In the group process there should be periodic occasions for *evaluation*, in which members clarify their purposes and objectives, as well as review the character and quality of their participation and the degree of fulfillment of their expectations.

5. In the total membership cycle there is certainly need for a clearly stated *definition of what the group stands for*, is trying to do, etc.; an adequate *induction* and *orientation* of new members so that they become fully effective participants; a fluid *process of participation*, in which members find new channels of interest and ex-

ploration; *opportunities for* emerging *leadership*—for individuals, as they discover new potentialities within themselves, to express these in and through the group; and finally, a clear presentation of *terminal facilities* through which members may conclude a satisfactory period of membership.

Some Matters of Policy

There are a few crucial considerations you will want to keep in mind if you're concerned with the problems of membership.

1. There should be a continuing effort to see that the aims and goals of an organization are clear and consistent.
   a. *Do the people who belong to it, for example, want it to be a mass organization with a broad but superficial program that will attract a wide variety of members and not offend any of them—or do they prefer it to appeal to a select group who wish to work intensively on one or two fields of interest?*
   b. *Do the members want the organization to be partisan or do they intend it to remain nonpartisan and to attract a broad segment of the community's population?*
   c. *Will the members limit the program to providing education about issues or do they intend to go on into action?*
   d. *Are the members chiefly concerned with providing education, recreation or culture for its members, or do they want the organization to make an impact on the community?*
   e. *Has the organization a natural clientele—veterans, parents, young adults, college alumni—or will it attract as many members as possible, irrespective of any special interests?*

   An organization is bound to fail if it tries to be all things to all people. Organizations, like individuals, must stand for something. They cannot go in all directions at once.
2. There should be an effort to make sure that people in the community understand what the aims and goals

of the organization are. And the membership committee should make it a point to know what the community thinks about the organization.

3. There should be no contradiction or conflict between the aims and policy of the membership committee and the overall policy of the organization.

   A change in dues or a public stand on a hotly contested issue may irrevocably alienate many potential or existing members. Not even the most skillful membership committee can subsequently win these people back. On the other hand, failure to take action on controversial issues may repel other potential members. An organization should be aware of reactions of this sort in the community and should take action with its eyes open to consequences.

4. There should be a constant effort to see that the overall policy of the organization makes provision for meeting the needs of a membership committee that is interested in getting and keeping active, interested people.

   a. *It should be possible to create new committees, for example, to provide opportunities for members to participate.*
   b. *There should be provision in the organization's by-laws for a planned rotation of the high offices.*
   c. *There should be provision for a periodic review of the by-laws to focus attention on any needed changes.*
   d. *There should be changes in an organization's program and in the methods of carrying it out as times change and new needs are discovered.*

5. There needs to be a general awareness within the organization that the members want to participate in various ways and at various levels.

   a. *They may want only to lend their moral support or to receive published materials.*
   b. *They may want a major outlet for the fulfillment of deep inner needs and drives.*
   c. *They should not be pushed to do more than they want to at any time.*
   d. *They should, however, be given a maximum opportunity to participate.* ◇◇

THE MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Maybe you are the chairman of a club's membership committee. Maybe you are just a member of a club that is trying to find new members. You have been told that the organization needs new blood—that the same people have been running it for years. Or your club has started a new project which requires more hands than the old members can furnish. Or perhaps your club needs more members of a certain kind—more young people, more men or more women, more college graduates, more people with practical experience, more newcomers in the community, a broader representation of various nationalities or creeds. These are your orders: "Scour the community and bring them in."

Where do you find all these different types of people? Once you have them, how do you attract them into your particular organization? How do you deal with the fact that membership chairmen from other organizations are working the same streets? How do you overcome the resistances produced by previous efforts to recruit these same people—efforts which have been unwise and have left a bad taste in people's mouths about being involved in organizational work? Is there a science which will explain how to get and keep members? Are there rules?

There are rules; and if you know the rules, you can have a lot of fun.

Remember that you aren't alone. Responsibility for

getting new members should be shared with others all along the line. So should responsibility for keeping old members—or letting them go.

Working as a Team

Don't let anyone try to convince you that it is your sole responsibility to "bring them in." Men and women are elusive game. You will need lots of assistance in bagging them. Everyone in your club needs to understand that the problems of membership are problems for the whole group. Vital organizations, with dynamic programs, clear and flexible goals, democratic organizational patterns and methods of operation, and warm and friendly working relationships have an easier job attracting and keeping members than do organizations with outworn programs, autocratic procedures, and stuffed-shirt memberships.

Every activity of your organization—news releases, legislative proposals, changes in dues, public meetings, endorsements—has some bearing on how easy it is to recruit members and how possible it will be to retain their interest and enthusiasm. Whenever the executive committee or board or general membership discuss any policy, your membership committee should insistently ask the questions: "What effect will this policy have on individual members? Will this policy make it easier or harder to keep the members we have as willing and active contributors? Will it make it easier or harder to recruit the kinds of new members we need—now and in the future?" Your committee should even ask that most embarrassing of all questions—the one that every organization should ask from time to time, especially if its membership is consistently dropping off—"Is this organization necessary? Is it still serving a function in the community that can be performed by no other organization? Does it really have a right to seek members or financial support?"

The Membership Committee

Your organization will no doubt center its membership activities in a membership committee. You may be lucky enough to have a committee which is a going

concern. People may already have volunteered for work. The board of directors or executive committee may have chosen the members and the chairman may have been appointed. Or your organization may have to begin from scratch to make up a membership committee. There are, anyway, certain essential qualifications for any effective committee.

1. The members should represent a cross-section of interests in the varied activities of the organization.
2. They should have been working with the organization long enough to be thoroughly familiar with its philosophy, program, methods, goals, and accomplishments.
3. They should believe in the organization and be convinced of its value to the community and to individual members and they should be able to translate that conviction to others.
4. They should represent a variety of experience in all phases of the organization's activities—finance, program, publicity, legislation or general organization.
5. They should be able to recognize potential abilities in others and to visualize the way in which prospective members might fit into the organization. They should be able to make prospective members see themselves in action in the organization.
6. They should be objective enough to keep a happy balance between the organization's goals and the individual's needs and interests.

The Job Ahead of You

Because what is everybody's business may soon become nobody's business, the membership committee should have primary responsibility for recruiting, orienting and keeping members.

This responsibility is fourfold:

1. To organize recruiting.
2. To prepare materials for distribution to potential members or to help familiarize them with the organization.
3. To orient new members to the group.
4. To work with the executive board of the organization on membership problems. ◇◇

THE CRUCIAL JOB OF RECRUITING

A group often gives a good deal of thought to the processes by which it looks for members. Its policies help to determine what the size of the membership is, what kind of people are to be approached, what the organization requires of its members. A group's maturing, then, can be evaluated better by the quality than by the quantity of its membership.

In social organizations a familiar way of recruiting members is the membership tea, where people interested in joining may come to see and to be seen. Some organizations mail out blanks or distribute them at large meetings. Still others rely entirely on the person-to-person approach.

The following principles may be useful to you if you are working on recruiting members.

1. Know what kinds of members you are looking for and in what approximate proportion they will be to the general membership.

   If, for example, you need more young people, you might concentrate on alumni lists; census lists; young "marrieds" known to business firms, housing projects or real estate firms as having recently purchased homes; or parents of kindergarten children.
   If you want members interested in civic affairs, you would turn to voting lists, members of public-affairs organizations, or subscribers to current news magazines and papers.
   If you are seeking supporters for a cultural program, you might turn to a list of library card holders or college alumni.

2. Realize that recruiting can never be a mass enterprise. It must be highly specialized, and much attention must be given to detail. Each person is an individual and must be treated as someone having important differ-

ences from every other person.

Names of potential members—simply as names—are practically worthless. You must discover other pertinent facts: age; economic background; special interests, abilities and skills; memberships in other organizations; activities in the community; friends and business associates; political affiliations; occupation, etc.

3. Recognize that recruiting should be as decentralized as possible.

It is much easier to carry out your responsibilities to the membership committee and to the organization as a whole by working in your own neighborhood, social circle or business firm. There you have prestige, and your enthusiastic endorsement of the organization carries weight.

Names of potential members should be parceled out to members of the membership committee, as well as to others in the organization, on the basis of related interests. The foreign-policy chairman, for example, will be a more successful recruiter of others interested in foreign affairs than will the finance chairman.

4. Be aware that personal contact is the best approach.

No method has ever been more effective than a face-to-face one. Your personal conviction about an organization is evident in the tone of your voice, your facial expression, your choice of words. You can adapt your sales talk to the response of your prospect. You can move him to immediate action. Therefore, if you can, telephone a potential member and ask for a personal interview.

Finding the Prospective Member

Where should you begin? How should you find the people you seek? You needn't begin from the beginning as if you were the first person who ever looked for new members. There are many resources available in the community to help you.

Among the most useful are:

Census list
Telephone directory
Classified directory (found in some smaller communities)
City directory
Voting lists
Chamber of Commerce information
Churches
Other existing organizations

Lists of parents who have children in school.
Lists of high school, college, and other school alumni.
New residents, as listed in real estate offices, industries, and housing projects.
Suggestions made by newspapers, radio stations, community leaders.

Possibly the best resource of all will be found in the present members of your organization and their friends. "A satisfied customer is the best advertisement."

Approaching the Prospective Member

If a personal contact is impossible, there are other methods of approach:

1. Invite the prospective member to one or to several meetings.
   a. *If possible, call up and ask him to attend with you personally.*
   b. *When he arrives at the meeting, see that he meets many others and that he has a pleasant impression of the organization.*
2. If possible, familiarize the prospective member with other types of activity in the organization. Examples of such activity might be:
   a. *Interviews with public officials.*
   b. *Public-opinion surveys.*
   c. *Radio programs.*
   d. *Visits to public offices, museums, galleries, etc.*
   e. *Work in the headquarters office.*
3. Send the prospective member publications that will interest him and tell him about your organization and its activities. Don't send him too much—just enough to intrigue him and make him want more.
4. Invite him to some social festivity. See that he meets many others and has a good time.
5. If you must invite him into membership by a personal letter, see that it is signed by someone favorably known to him or by someone whose invitation carries weight with him. There should always be a personal follow-up by telephone or an invitation to a meeting.

24 Always be sensitive to the feelings of the person you are

trying to attract. Know his interests, likes and dislikes, friends and foes, and act accordingly.

On this page is a sample of the kind of interview you might hold with a prospective member. It is intended to be helpful only, not to be used as a model that should be followed exactly.

Introductory Interview	Pointers to Watch
I came to see you today because we want you to be a member of _____ organization. We feel that you would be a very valuable member and would enjoy belonging.	*Importance of person*
As you may know, the purpose of our organization is to _____. During the past year our program included _____. We feel that our organization is successful because we have accomplished _____.	*Scope of program.*
There is a lot to do in our organization and we enjoy working with each other. We do have a good time and accomplish a great deal. You probably read about the fine meeting we had last month when _____ presented the _____. We realized after hearing _____ that our organization could do something more about _____. We need you to help us because _____.	*Member's experience in the organization.* *Worthwhile cause* *Personal interest (why we want you).*
This pamphlet tells you more about our aims and goals, what we have accomplished in the past, and about our dues. I think you will be interested in reading it, and certainly hope you will decide to join.	*Materials to read*
I believe you know _____, who is our president. I'd like to have you go to the next meeting with me. You can see then what we do, and have a chance to talk with other members. I'll call you in a few days.	*Leadership and other members.* *Follow-up*

As a result of your interview you may want to make out a prospective member's card like the one below so that you can keep pertinent information on file.

FRONT

PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS CARD

Name .....

Address.....Tel. No.....

Recommended by.....

Qualifications for membership.....

.....

Community contacts.....

Other affiliations.....

Special skills, abilities, interests.....

.....

Available time.....

REVERSE SIDE *(Make note by tabs for time of next follow-up)*

Date of contact.....

Outcome .....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

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KEEPING YOUR MEMBERS

Your work isn't done when your prospective member signs on the dotted line and pays his dues. You must begin to make him feel at home—to find his place as a welcome member of your organization family.

If possible, your organization would do well to take public note of new members joining up. It would be a good idea to list their names in your weekly or monthly publication and to mention any personal items of interest about them that will help to identify them to their fellow members. Some organizations welcome newcomers formally at the meeting following the time they join. New members might serve on the reception committee at the first social function held by the organization after they join, or they may simply rise and take a bow as their names are called out at the business meeting. Whatever method seems best to your organization will work well as long as the new members feel at home.

As soon after their formal induction as possible, new members should be interviewed personally by someone who will take this job as his major responsibility—possibly a member of the volunteer or organization committee. The interviewer should try to discover the new member's interests and skills as well as his hopes for self-realization through the organization. Whatever information is gathered should be recorded and later trans-

ferred to a card file, where it can be used by many chairmen and committee members in the organization as they go about finding volunteer helpers for varied assignments.

Orienting New Members

What happens to the people who have joined an organization? Do they become active members or sit back and wait for other people to run the show? Do they maintain their original interest in the organization; or after the initial enthusiasm has worn away, do their attendance and participation slack off? Do they find the personal satisfaction they were promised or are they disappointed? Do they find more, or less, than they expected when they signed the membership slip and paid their dues?

All members need to work together to see that everyone remains interested in the organization and active in its work.

A person who has just joined a group usually asks himself, sometimes subconsciously. "What do I expect of this organization? What's going to happen to me as a member?" Less frequently, although this question is important, too, he asks, "What does this group expect of me?" His willingness to take stock of the possibilities in this two-way human relationship often makes him become a group member quickly.

Any group, on the other hand, needs first of all to have a well-defined plan of what it requires of members—what it wants them to do. Some organizations handle this need by giving the new member a record of past achievements and a detailed list of present ongoing enterprises. The new member can then find a comfortable niche. An analysis of the various kinds of jobs to be done in the organization and an explanation of committee activities is another way of taking care of this need. Then the group needs a plan to find out what the new member is like and what he is capable of adding to the group. One social agency has looked to the college campus for precedent in handling this need—new members are inducted with the help of an old member who has the job of drawing out the newcomer, answering his questions and making him feel at home. A third group need at this point is to find out what the newcomer wants from the organization and what he hopes to do in it or through it. Some potentially unhappy members may be spotted

and set on the right track by realistic treatment at this stage of their membership.

Any new member is fairly consistently concerned with the question, "What does the group think of me?" In this early stage of his group career, he is likely to be self-conscious as well as concerned about the strangeness or peculiarities of the particular group he has joined. Later on he will take for granted those things which set this group apart from other groups. Another question in his mind is likely to be, "What do I want to do here, and what help will they give me?" Recognizing such a question as normal for a new group member to ask, group leaders will lay plans to pull the member into some activity that will begin to show up his potential usefulness and to make him feel necessary and wanted. If they point out the relationship of this special activity to the whole program, the new member will begin acquainting himself with the organization and finding his place in it.

The business of a member joining a club and of a club being joined is a two-way responsibility. For the process to be successful, the individual needs to explore, and the group needs to facilitate the exploration. The privileges which are sought along with the responsibilities are rich, too—the individual looks for a place and an opportunity to grow and to participate in group growth; the group looks for ways to develop the person and to be enriched by his development.

Some Ways to Keep Members

Every new member in your organization needs to understand the organization's history, philosophy, ideals, structure and methods. Your organization may want to invite new members to some sort of social get-together at which old hands speak, answer questions, or lead discussions. Some organizations prepare filmstrip stories of their activities and provide written manuals describing their work. Perhaps the best way to help a new member find his niche is to plan an individual orientation program for each new member. Give him a chance to attend a variety of committee meetings and to take an experimental hand at many different activities until he finds the things that for him bring the fulfillment he sought

when he decided to join the organization.

1. Keep an up-to-date census of individual members.

a. By keeping data of member's activities, interests, time, etc., on a membership card. (Side 1)

Side 1

MEMBERSHIP CARD

Name .....
Home Address.....
..... Telephone.....
Business Address.....
..... Telephone.....
Date of Birth.....Education.....
Skills .....
Special Training.....
Special Interests.....
Paid Employment.....
Membership in other Groups.....
Reason for Joining.....
Preference of work in Organization.....
Preference of person to work with.....

b. By keeping records of participation up-to-date. (side 2)

Side 2

MEMBERSHIP RECORD

Jobs done:.....
Date .....
Comment .....
Offices held:.....
Committee chairs:.....
Committee memberships:.....
Attendance: Frequent.....Occasional.....Rare.....
Degree of Participation:
Very active.....Fairly active.....Inactive.....

c. ***By semi-annual interview with individual members.*** Such an interview of individual members makes possible a continuous evaluation of the possibilities for members to participate as they are interested in doing; it checks on dissatisfactions; and gives the members a feeling that they are important in the organization.

What things about the organization have you found to be good and useful to you?

What kind of work, other than what you have done in the past, would you like to do now?

Do you feel that there are any things you would like to do in the organization that you've found impossible to do thus far?

Are there any differences between what you expected to find as a member and what you have actually found? Yes____ No____

Within the organization, do you have any pet peeves you would like to see corrected?

What one thing in the organization do you consider to be most in need of modification?

Compared with other organizations in which you have been a member, how do you feel about this one?

2. Provide opportunities for *participation:*

—in planning programs—in doing special jobs—in working on committees—in making reports (even though not a chairman)—in small group discussions.

3. Provide opportunities for developing skills:

—discussion techniques—group participation—public speaking.

4. Recognize members for their accomplishments in the organization:

—in local news reports—in house organ—at general meetings—by promotion in responsibility.

5. Plan for review of organization's activities:

—by all members—at least once a year—through small group meetings of total membership.

6. Relate policy and program to meet needs of members:

—wide opportunity for participation within organization structure—dues within member's reach—money raising not too burdensome—committee structure effective—election procedures democratic. ◇ ◇

THE PROBLEM OF DROPPED MEMBERS

Although most organizations strenuously pursue *prospective* members, few are concerned in any systematic way with discovering why members lose interest or drop out entirely. There are two good reasons why a sound drop-out policy is essential to the work of any voluntary group.

1. Members who have dropped out or who no longer attend meetings may be persuaded to renew their interest.
2. Knowledge of why people drop out will help in assessing the general condition of the organization, in opening to inspection any reasons for dissatisfaction, and in determining future policy.

Neither healthy individuals nor healthy groups remain static. As a group changes its interests, a person may find himself no longer sharing these interests. Or, perhaps, a member may have a whole new field of interest opened to him by your organization, and that new interest may lead him to group activity outside of your program. In other words, a member may answer "no" to the question, "Do I need this group?" without laying himself open to criticism or without criticizing the group.

Or a member may say to himself, "Does this group need me?" and find that his reply is "no." For example, Mr. Arndt may have real leadership qualities, interest and ability and may have served his organization long and well. Would it not be logical for him to move on to leadership elsewhere and to allow others in the organization a chance to develop their leadership skills? Another member may discover that there is a change in focus in the group. The skills which he contributed in the past are no longer needed. Perhaps he is an organizer, who seeks the experience of developing new programs but becomes bored with the more prosaic experience of a continuing program. You probably know someone like Mrs. Hall, who found real satisfaction in organizing a neighborhood group which set up a day nursery. But with the goal achieved, and no one needed to buttonhole the city fathers or the local merchants, Mrs. Hall felt that her job was done, and she resigned. Any person in your town is likely to look at the relative importance to him of the groups to which he belongs. From the standpoint of the prestige in the community which he will gain from belonging to it—and prestige is important to him—some other organization may turn out to be more important than yours. Confronted with the necessity of making a choice between the two, he may withdraw from your organization. Will you challenge the logic of his decision from his point of view?

From the standpoint of an organization, whenever a member withdraws, an analysis of the factors which led to his dropping out should be made. Has the organization failed at any point in the process of finding and keeping members? In addition, however, there is another question for the people in the organization to keep in mind. "Do we need the member, considering both his potential contribution to our group and his possible contribution elsewhere?" From the neighborhood-association point of view, Mrs. Hall was no longer needed by the group, once the day-care center was firmly established.

On the other hand, if a group has a great many members drop out and if these drop-outs can't be reasonably accounted for by an analysis of the membership process, the active members may want to raise the question,

"Should the group change its goals or purpose?" Further consideration may even lead to an evaluation of how necessary the continued existence of the group is.

We have seen, and so have you, groups or organizations which continue to exist far beyond any point of usefulness to either their members or society generally. With a group which is simply organized and organized for some specific purpose, it is fairly easy to decide at what point the group should disband. As an organization becomes institutionalized, the question of whether it should cease to exist becomes more difficult to decide. The organization may become static, or it may begin to move on a downward plane—with both staff and members expending their major energy in keeping the institution alive.

Things to Remember

Sometimes a drop-out means merely that a member has become less active than before; sometimes it means he has lost all interest in an organization and has no desire to continue his membership.

The fact that some members lose interest or even drop their memberships is not necessarily a sign of any failure on the part of the organization. Such conditions as the following will of course affect the interest and activity of any member within an organization.

a. Changed interests
b. Poor health
c. New responsibilities
d. A general decline in memberships in various organizations.

Every organization should expect some turnover of membership.

Developing A Salvage Plan

If your organization wants to make a determined effort to re-interest its inactive members, a subcommittee should review the membership record of everyone who has dropped out entirely or has shown increasing dissatisfaction and lack of interest. Do any common factors point to sources of disaffection, loss of interest or personal problems that led to the members dropping out?

In order to analyze the situation, discuss the matter of

drop-outs thoroughly with every inactive or former member. An index card file on drop-outs will be helpful to you in making and using such an analysis.

Discuss with the friends or associates of members who have dropped any reasons which these members have given as to why they dropped out or became inactive.

Keep in active contact with members who have become inactive and especially check or follow-up drop-outs caused by personal emergencies (illness, new baby, temporary absence, etc.)

Arrange a personal interview with members who have dropped out of your organization or who have become inactive and keep a record of both people who have dropped out and the reasons they have done so. The sample interview and the drop-out record card printed on this page will suggest what sort of questions to ask and what sort of facts to keep.

Interview with Dropped or Inactive Members

We are very interested in finding out why people who were members of _____ organization have not renewed their memberships:

a. Could you give us some idea as to why you are leaving?
b. (If not mentioned) Are there specific things that bothered you about the organization or your part in it?
c. What good things are there about _____ organization?
d. Would you recommend any changes in _____ that might strengthen its goals, membership policy, methods of functioning?
e. What new circumstances might help you renew interest or activity in _____?
f. (If appropriate) Could we be of help in suggesting other organizations more suited to your present interests?
g. Are there any recommendations you can give us from your experience as a member that might help us in our relationships with other members?

Final Suggestions

Keep a post-mortem card index of reasons why members have left your organization and review this index regularly for trends.

Make and keep in contact with membership committees of other organizations to get the benefit of their experiences.

Keep your executive body up-to-date on indications of trouble. Knowledge about why people drop out, about when they begin to lose interest, about how eager they are to participate in the activities of the organization will show up weaknesses in the overall aims and program.

Side 1.

DROPPED OUT OR LAPSED MEMBERS

Name .....

Address .....

Tel. No.....

Memb. dates from.....to.....

Activity record:.....
(Incl. offices held)

Dates .....

Work done.....

Comments .....

Side 2.

From Interview:

1. Stated reason for leaving:.....
2. Major satisfactions while member:.....
3. Major dissatisfactions:.....
4. Recommendations of ex-member:.....
5. Follow-up and disposition:.....

.....

.....

.....

◇ ◇

THE MEASURE OF ATTENDANCE

Of course, numbers are important for some types of meetings, but quality and composition seem to me more important. We work hard to create an audience that is alive and responsible and that produces within itself a kind of group experience that is valuable.

To be specific, recently we had a forum, *Education, U.S.A., 1954.* Its purpose was to stimulate interest in some educational problems—interest that would lead to clearer thinking on our needs and a sense of competency in tackling them.

We were fortunate to have secured the President of Harvard as one of our Forum speakers, so the size of the audience was no problem. Its selection was.

Obviously, the first step was to list the groups primarily concerned with education and to decide, on the basis of past experience, which groups had proved their willingness to accept responsibility and give leadership in this field.

A second consideration was to divide the available tickets so that all sections of the State would be represented.

After every meeting, we count our success or failure by the following tests:

(1) Was the size of the group adequate to the purpose?

For example, 200 to 500 for a general forum meeting designed to promote attendance at training courses to follow; 25 to 100 for training courses for leaders; 10 to 50 for extension meetings in rural areas.

(2) Did it represent a wide range of experience and educational and economic backgrounds? Have the participants a recognized place in some organization? Our average meeting will have an attendance from at least 10 towns and from a variety of organizations, usually about 10, representing church groups, federated clubs, patriotic and service organizations, farm women, League of Women Voters, and so forth.

(3) Did the group really get a chance to exchange views and so widen its reaction to the speaker or speakers? Did the women actually get an opportunity to talk to those they came to hear?

(4) Did the participants do something about the question later?

All right! He's met the requirements! I say the requirements are all wet!

With these tests in mind, let us go back to our January Forum. The tickets were assigned through state organizations on the basis of interest, with the distinct understanding that they should be distributed through branches in such a way that all sections of the state could share in the opportunity provided by the Forum. Conditions of acceptance were set up: All registrants must come with the understanding that they were to spend the day; no registration was accepted without a check covering the luncheon meeting. In order to bring those on the platform into as sympathetic and intimate a relationship with those in the audience as possible, our distinguished group of educators, Dr. Pusey, Mrs. Hottel, and Dr. Shuster, did not make set speeches. They answered questions or comments as to the failure or values of our present educational system by the president of the Connecticut P.T.A. and a group of five citizens of varied background or experience.

The audience was organized into small units of six each. People sat at the tables where they later had their luncheon. Each table had a hostess, a woman volunteer worker who had demonstrated qualities of leadership. This meant that prior to the meeting some 60 women were specially invited and briefed as to their responsibilities, which were to introduce those at the tables to one another, to encourage discussion, and keep it on the subject of education. At each table there was a professional educator (a balance of one professional to five lay people) to enable each group to get acquainted with an expert point of view. The other four were lay people assigned to the group in such a way as to enlarge their acquaintance with other Connecticut women whose interests were similar to their own.

To carry out this plan, we deliberately curtailed attendance. Our hall holds more than 800 people, but with this group organization we limited attendance to four hundred. Later, because of the size and quality of our waiting list, we let about 150 people audit from the balcony.

Luncheon discussion was lively. At its close each table was asked for written questions. Because of the size of the group, we let our platform people eat separately. At training courses they are assigned to the different

tables, but after the morning workout and with an afternoon discussion still to come, we thought a little time for rest and recreation was called for. Not too much rest either, since during the luncheon period all the principals made recordings for our radio station. Incidentally, a tape recording of the whole procedure was made and is being transcribed onto records for use by discussion groups. This is part of the follow-up.

Now we are in the midst of completing the details of the training course which was planned to follow the Forum for those who are particularly concerned—club program people, chairmen of education committees, members of local boards of education. We expect an attendance of about 80. The course will be in four sessions of four hours on alternate weeks. Then we expect the results to fan out.

Following the Forum meeting, a superintendent of schools came in to see us. He had been at a table where one of our Advisory Board members was hostess. The four other lay people were from four different towns. One was a P.T.A. worker with a large family, from a small community, one a senior in college who wanted to teach, another an ex-pupil of his, long lost track of, now on a local board of education. He was enthusiastic about the meeting but especially excited about his group. "We were all steamed up before the meeting began. We never let down. I learned a lot." If he learned, I know he gave.

Another young woman, whose interest grows out of the fact that she has children in the schools and a husband on a local board, found herself next to a Catholic nun who is one of the great educators of Connecticut, Sister Mary de Lourdes. Sister Mary's enthusiasm and appreciation communicated itself to the lay people at her table and made being there a rare privilege.

Of course, some tables did not achieve the same response, but more did than we had dared hope for. The net result was an audience that was alive, not merely receptive; and on the basis of past experience, I feel confident that the end of that meeting was not 3:30 o'clock on January 20th! ◇ ◇

WHO BELONGS TO WHAT IN A BIG CITY?

WE have many impressions but little exact information about the part which membership in organised groups plays in the lives of people in a great metropolis. America has been called a nation of joiners. But our great cities have also been described as places of individual loneliness and isolation. Formal organizations are one of the important means by which people in great cities can act together. We need facts to answer questions about people and organizations in the large city. How many people belong to organizations? What kinds or organizations do they belong to? What kinds of people belong? How active are members? How is activity in organizations related to other aspects of community life?

While we have no accurate answers to such questions for the country as a whole, we now have such information for one of our great cities, Detroit. Early in 1952, the Detroit Area Study of the University of Michigan conducted a survey of Detroit to find preliminary answers to these questions.

The sample interviewed was made up of 749 people over 20 years of age selected scientifically on a random

basis to represent a cross-section of the Detroit Metropolitan Area. While specific figures are subject to some sampling error, the methods used justify confidence in the over-all results.

Are People Joiners?

About eight out of every ten people in Detroit belong to either a church or other formal organization or to both. About one-fifth report no organizational membership of any kind. Figure 1 gives a general picture of the membership status of the population.

By "formal group" we mean what people mean in everyday speech when they speak of the clubs, societies, or other organizations in which they are members. They usually have in mind a group with officers, with a constitution, and with regular meetings. If we take out church memberships, about two-thirds of the population belong to formal organizations; about one-third do not.

What About Men and Women as Joiners?

More of the men in Detroit are members of organizations than are the women. Figure 1 shows that twice as many women as men report no membership of any kind. Women are restricted to the "church only" group more than five times as frequently as men. Men are more likely than women to belong to organizations other than churches. There is evidence that the higher membership rate for men is largely due to their more frequent membership in labor unions. (See Figure 6b.)

How Close are Non-Belongers to Organizations?

We have already seen that about one-third of all Detroit Area adults have no present memberships in organizations, other than churches. But do these persons have contact with organizations through other members of their families? And have they previously belonged? Our data show that the number with no family contact with organizations and with no record of previous membership is significantly large.

Altogether about fourteen percent of Detroit Area residents have *never* belonged to an organization *and* have no person in their family who now belongs. These are persons with a minimum of direct contact with formal non-church organizations. Perhaps this is the lonely

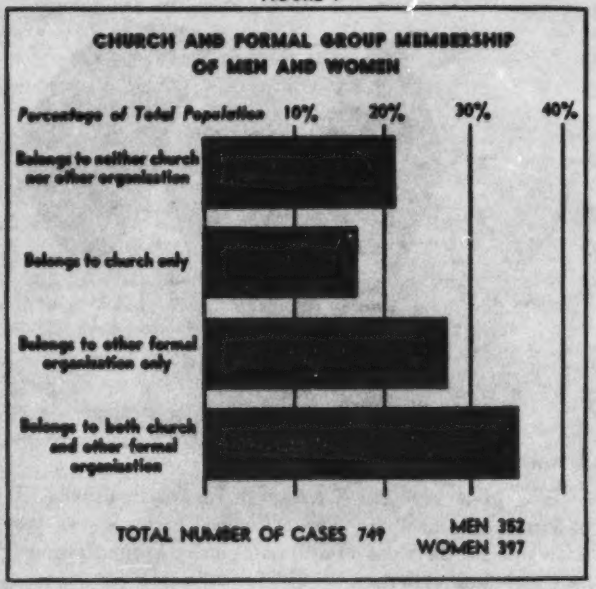
group often described as "isolated" from the organized activities of clubs and organizations.

About two-thirds of the persons with no present membership report that they have *never* belonged to a non-church organization. This represents about one in four of all Detroit Area residents. Figure 5 shows that about two-thirds of the persons with no present membership belong to families in which no other member belongs to a non-church organization. This also represents about one-quarter of the Detroit Area population.

How Many People Have Multiple Memberships?

Our stereotype of the joiner is one who belongs to a large number of different organizations. How typical is this? The following figure shows how many people hold different numbers of memberships.

FIGURE 1



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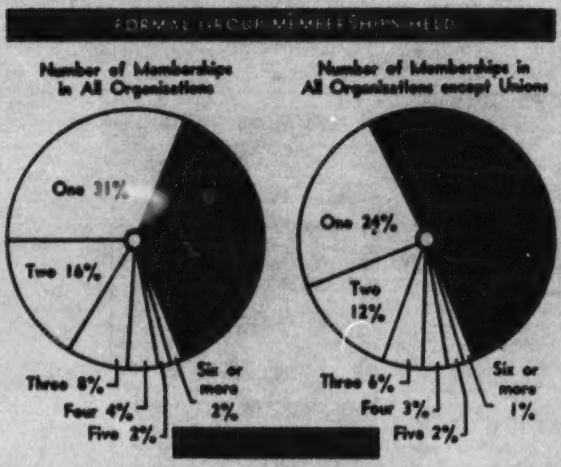
Clearly, the joiners are a small minority. The average number of memberships held is slightly more than one. About two-thirds of the population either do not belong at all or belong to one organization only. At the other extreme approximately eight percent of the population report memberships in four or more organizations. While this group is relatively small, it may be the important leadership group which serves as a connecting link between different community groups and agencies.

Since union membership may range from passive acceptance of payroll deductions for dues to intensive participation, the number of memberships held in addition to union membership is also shown in Figure 2. About half of the population belong to organizations other than unions.

FIGURE 2



What Do People Join?

In a great city like Detroit, there are thousands of different organizations. The following figure shows the extent of memberships in different kinds of organizations, not including churches.

FIGURE 3

Types of Organizations People Belong to

	Percent of Population Belonging to Each
Labor unions	30%
Fraternal organizations or lodges (For example Eagles, B'nai B'rith, Masons)	13%
Church-connected groups, *not classified elsewhere* (For example Altar Society, Holy-Name Society)	9%
Sport team or hobby club	8%
Youth-serving groups (For example PTA)	8%
Social club	8%
Charitable and welfare organizations (Actual participation, apart from giving money)	7%
Professional groups (For example medical society)	5%
Neighborhood improvement associations	5%
Veterans' organizations	5%
Women's clubs	2%
Political clubs	2%
Business or civic groups (For example Rotary, Chamber of Commerce)	2%
Community center	1%
Nationality group, *not classified elsewhere*	1%
Other groups	3%

Membership is most frequently in labor unions. Nearly one-third of the population are members of labor unions. Fraternal organizations are next most important. Church-connected groups (apart from churches themselves) are shown as next most important numerically—involving about one person in eleven. This is actually a minimum figure, since church-connected groups were classified with one of the other types of organizations wherever their

activity was not purely religious. If these additional groups are considered, too, altogether about seventeen percent of all memberships in Detroit-Area organizations were those connected with churches or other religious groups.

How Many Are Active Members?

The population is about evenly divided between those who engage in some organizational activity and those who are inactive (if we define as "inactive" both non-members and members who attend no meetings).

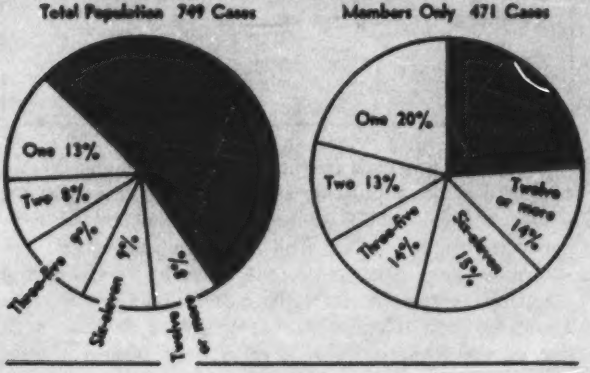
If we consider only the members, about one-quarter attended no meetings during the three months prior to the interview. Another third attended either one or two meetings in the three-month period. The remaining two-fifths attended three or more meetings. Figure 4 shows the frequency with which people report attending meetings.

Another way of measuring activity is by the amount of time members give outside attendance of meetings.

FIGURE 4

FREQUENCY OF ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS

Number of Meetings Attended in Past Three Months by

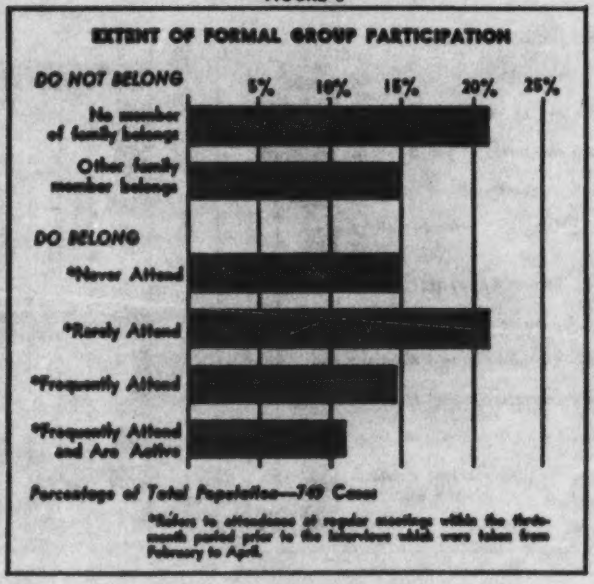


Approximately three out of every four members reported that they had put in no time during the previous three months. On the other hand, about eight percent of the members reported that they had put in time on at least ten different days during the previous three months.

These various measures of membership and activity can be combined into a single picture of how much participation and activity there is. This is shown in the following figure.

In this classification, the persons who do not belong to any non-church organizations have been divided into those who do and those who do not have a family member belonging to such organizations. That part of the population which belongs to organizations has been divided into four subgroups according to how often they attended meetings and whether they were active outside of meetings.

FIGURE 5

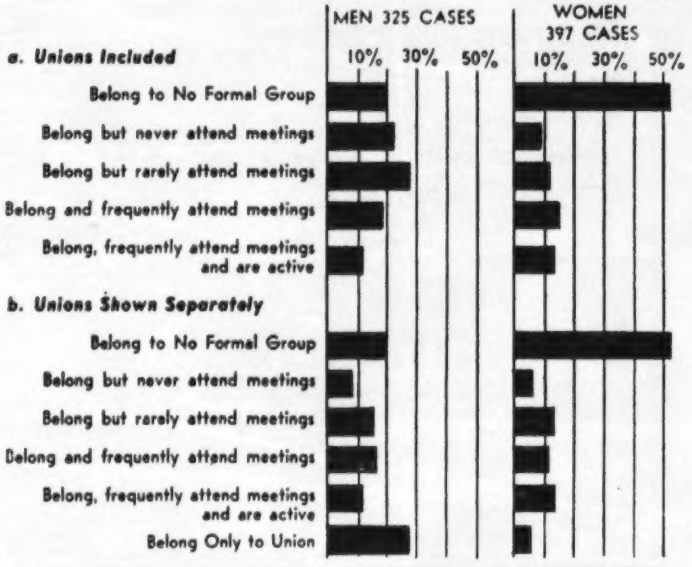


About one of four members was completely inactive, failing even to attend meetings in the previous three months. At the other extreme, about one in eight in the population (one in five among members) not only attended meetings frequently but was active outside of meetings. A middle group of about one in three in the population (somewhat more than one-half of the members) were active in attending meetings but not otherwise.

The group of actives who constituted about one in eight of the total population may be defined as the leadership group. Most of this group did, in fact, hold office in some organization. Probably it is this group which will need to take the lead, if those now inactive are to become more responsible participants in the organizational life of the city.

FIGURE 6

PARTICIPATION BY MEN AND WOMEN IN FORMAL GROUPS


MEN 325 CASES
WOMEN 397 CASES
10% 30% 50%
10% 30% 50%
a. Unions Included
Belong to No Formal Group
Belong but never attend meetings
Belong but rarely attend meetings
Belong and frequently attend meetings
Belong, frequently attend meetings and are active
b. Unions Shown Separately
Belong to No Formal Group
Belong but never attend meetings
Belong but rarely attend meetings
Belong and frequently attend meetings
Belong, frequently attend meetings and are active
Belong Only to Union

◇◇

INTRODUCING THE AEA

The AEA (Adult Education Association of the United States of America) is a non-profit organization founded in May, 1951, as an instrument for developing a united adult education movement. The general purposes of AEA, as stated in its Constitution, are:

—"To further the concept of adult education as a process continuing throughout life.

—"To promote and develop adult education in the United States by affording opportunities to professional and non-professional adult educators to increase their competence and by encouraging and assisting organizations and agencies . . . to develop adult education activities and to work together in the interests of adult education.

—"To receive and disseminate information about adult education.

—"To promote the balanced development of educational services for adult persons in the United States.

—"To cooperate with adult education agencies internationally."

United in the AEA to further these purposes through a program including field services, conferences, publications, and public relations, are over 12,000 men and women who work with adults in formal and informal educational and training programs. These leaders represent every sector of American society—education, labor, agriculture, industry, religion, social welfare, government service, and a host of voluntary associations.

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